

I claim:

1. A tether panel to be used in a tether system of an air bag, said tether panel comprising at least two tether segments cut from a textile fabric, said fabric constructed of a group of warp yarns and a group of fill yarns, wherein each of said segments is cut in substantial alignment with one of said groups of yarns.
2. The tether panel of Claim 1 wherein said tether segments are substantially rectangular in shape.
3. The tether panel of Claim 1 wherein said tether panel is comprised of three of said tether segments.
4. The tether panel of Claim 1 wherein said tether panel is comprised of four of said tether segments.
5. The tether panel of Claim 1 wherein said tether panel is further comprised of a reinforcement, said reinforcement being positioned centrally between said tether segments.
6. A bag panel, said bag panel having an axis of radial symmetry, said axis of radial symmetry being located within a central attachment region of said bag panel, said bag panel further having at least two tether segments arranged radially about said central attachment region in a configuration having at least one axis of symmetry that is perpendicular to said axis of radial symmetry of said bag panel, wherein said tether segments are cut from a textile fabric, said textile fabric constructed of a group of warp yarns and a group of fill yarns, said tether segments being cut in substantial alignment with one of said groups of yarns.

7. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said tether segments are arranged radially about said axis of radial symmetry of said bag panel.

5 8. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said axis of radial symmetry passes through the center of said central attachment region.

9. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said central attachment region associated with said bag panel contains a reinforcement.

10 10. The bag panel of Claim 9 wherein said reinforcement is attached to said tether segments.

11. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said tether segments are substantially rectangular in shape.

12. The bag panel of Claim 11 wherein said tether segments are substantially congruent.

13. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said bag panel is comprised of three of said tether segments.

14. The bag panel of Claim 13 wherein said bag panel is comprised of three tether segments and at least one reinforcement attached to said tether segments.

25 15. The bag panel of Claim 6 wherein said bag panel is comprised of four of said tether segments.

16. The bag panel of Claim 15 wherein said bag panel is comprised of four tether segments and at least one reinforcement attached to said tether segments.

5 17. An air bag, said air bag having at least one tether panel, said tether panel comprising at least two tether segments cut from a textile fabric, said fabric constructed of a group of warp yarns and a group of fill yarns, wherein each of said segments is cut in substantial alignment with one of said groups of yarns.

10 18. The air bag of Claim 17, said air bag having an axis of radial symmetry and being comprised of a first bag panel and a second bag panel, said axis of radial symmetry being located within a central attachment region of said first bag panel and said second bag panel, said first and second bag panels further having at least two tether segments arranged radially about said central attachment region in a configuration having at least one axis of symmetry that is perpendicular to said axis of radial symmetry of said bag panel, wherein said tether segments connect said first bag panel to said second bag panel and wherein said tether segments are cut from a textile fabric in alignment with the primary load-bearing axis of the fabric.

15 20 19. A fabric blank comprising a textile fabric, said textile fabric constructed of a group of warp yarns and a group of fill yarns, on which a pattern-wise configuration of air bag panels, tether segments, and reinforcements is arranged in tiled relation, said tether segments being cut in substantial alignment with one of said groups of yarns.

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20. The fabric blank of Claim 19 wherein said tether segments are substantially rectangular in shape and are congruent.

21. The fabric blank of Claim 19 wherein said reinforcements are substantially circular in shape.

22. The fabric blank of Claim 19 wherein said textile fabric is coated.

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23. The fabric blank of Claim 19 wherein said textile fabric is laminated.